



Media Reality ✓ Check **QUICK TAKE**

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OUT-OF-TOUCH CNN STAR BRANDS U.S. REPORTERS "AFRAID"

AMANPOUR'S CLUELESS CRITICISM OF AMERICAN MEDIA'S WAR NEWS

Surveying the American media landscape earlier this month, CNN's Christiane Amanpour lectured a group at Harvard's Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy that journalists just aren't criticizing the Bush administration as often as they should. Amanpour's condemnation of her colleagues was quoted by Mark Jurkowitz in a March 14 *Boston Globe* story: **"I think people are afraid of challenging the administration,"** she upbraided. **"I think the Bush administration is getting a lot of cover from us willing to censor ourselves."**

Of course, the CNN correspondent has been out of the country, so let's help her out: U.S. networks have not been suppressing criticism of either the President or his administration. Last night, for example, all three network newscasts summoned civil libertarians to grouse about the Pentagon's plan for military tribunals. And ABC's Peter Jennings chose to highlight complaints about the administration's plan to interview an additional 3,000 foreign nationals: **"Many of those already questioned say it was terrifying that they were, in their words, 'victims of ethnic profiling.'"**

On Wednesday's *Good Morning America*, Claire Shipman tried to bolster charges that the administration is too secretive by resurrecting a now-discredited complaint: **"It's not the first time the White House has been accused of being arrogant with information. Key members of Congress say they were not briefed about the existence of a shadow government that's been set up in the event of emergency."** In fact, top congressional leaders were provided or offered briefings about what was reported by *U.S. News & World Report* and the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* last October. Not much of a secret.

Criticism of the President and American policies isn't new. After a Gallup poll showed that most citizens in ten Muslim countries had an unfavorable view of the U.S., ABC's Terry Moran argued that it had to be America's fault. **"Many Arab-Americans say it's not just perceptions at issue but U.S. policies, especially in the Middle East,"** Moran stated on the February 27 *World News Tonight*, adding that **"other analysts say Mr. Bush's bellicose language may be exacerbating the problem."** The ABC report failed to cite any analysts who disagreed with the premise that U.S. policies are at fault.

American reporters may not be blasting Bush as much as Ms. Amanpour wishes. But their coverage has hardly been timid.